

# Mobile & Wired

## Tweens In An Interactive Mobile World

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A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
under the supervision of Dr Kirsty Young & Associate Professor Matthew Kearney.

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## CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

*I, Anne-Louise Agnew, declare that this thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy, in the School of International Studies and Education, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Technology Sydney.*

*This thesis is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis. This document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.*

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*Begin at the beginning and go on till you come to the end; then stop (Lewis Carol)*

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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

**ABS:** Australian Bureau of Statistics

**ITME:** In Time Mobile Experiences

**MEDS:** Mobile Enabled Data Sharing

**MESTA:** Mobile Enabled Self-directed Think Aloud

**MEMO:** Mobile Enabled *Modus Operandi* (Methods of operation)

**Mobile device:** Includes smartphones, laptops, tablets and smartwatches

**M&W:** Mobile and Wired Study (this study)

**Multiplicity:** the quality or state of being multiple or various

**Parent:** Refers throughout thesis to parent/s and/or primary carer/s of a child

**Polychronic:** Individuals who can carry out multiple things at a time

**Polycontextural:** the different contexts where digital technologies might be used

**Polymedia:** The relationship between the social and technological

**Polymediatic:** Enacting polymedia interactions and relationship

**Polyspatial:** Functioning and adapting flexibly across different points of location

**Polysynchronous:** blending of multiple means of face-to-face and online; asynchronous and synchronous communication

**Tween:** child aged 9-13 years of age



## ABSTRACT

This study has sought to deepen understandings of what is happening when pre-adolescent children aged 9-13 (tweens) use mobile technologies for intentional and/or unintentional learning as they participate in formal and informal activities in their everyday lives, exploring the skills and digital literacies that are cultivated during these interactions. The study considered the interplay between these experiences and concepts, and the impact this has on our understanding of the tweens' perception and use of time, place, and space.

The 'inside and outside' of tween use of mobile technologies has been examined, considering how pre-adolescents esoterically and inextricably engage with mobile devices across a range of activities, formal and informal, structured, and unstructured. The ways in which tweens view their digital lives and how they adapt to the changes that mobile technologies afford has been investigated in addition to exploring the impact on learning across a range of physical and virtual spaces. This study has encompassed the range of everyday mobile technology experiences of the tween from a person-first perspective considering the interplay between their different uses of mobile technologies as they navigate their digital lives.

Alternative methods for the collection of authentic data have been adopted, reflecting the changing nature of the research landscape in contemporary times. This study has implemented novel approaches to researching the mobile experiences of tweens, leveraging the technologies available to implement innovative strategies to enhance data collection instruments for interviewing, and investigating authentic practices of pre-teenage children.



